



#BLACKVOICESMATTER: Race, Image and Message at The Dawn of Recorded Sound was a commission in 2015 by The Recorded Sound Division of The Library of Congress for use on *The National Jukebox*

The Pilot was commissioned during the era of national racial unrest with the murders of Trayvon Martin, Tamar Rice, Michael Brown and the Ferguson disturbances.

Unpublished due to fears arising from the explosion of White Nationalism at the dawn of The Trump Administration, this scholarly and provocative assessment has been expanded and has become a core competency of Mr. Doggett's scholarship in the interdisciplinary fields of race, music, cultural politics, recorded sound and technology.

The following is an excerpt of the Commission's introduction

A Narrated Tour with Archivist, Historian and Exhibitions Curator, Bill Doggett

#BlackVoicesMatter: Race, Image and Message at The Dawn of Recorded Sound is presented as an historical tour and invitation to dialogue in the aftermath of contemporary events surrounding race and race relations.

The repertoire of early recorded sound, first on cylinder records and later on 78rpm discs, is a reflection of the social, cultural and political times and events which informed the songs and the artists who recorded them. However controversial then and today, they represent a rich insight into the mindset of that time and represent a history that needs to be examined for its sources and understood and finally embraced as part of a document of American popular culture of its era.

In this light, the songs and the recordings are "*The Colored Museum*," to quote the title of the play by George C. Wolfe that explores African American identity in the United States, a multi-hued and kaleidoscopic collection of portraits and impressions of African American life that calls out to the visitor to *closely look at and listen to...* as if touring a museum of historic and famous paintings. One wants to sit and ponder the levels of such works of art.

The recordings are a document of American history often *through an imagined and exaggerated lense* reflecting the popularity of the entertainment genre of Minstrelsy and Coon Shows established before The Civil War and afterwards.

